MARVEL
PSR 41

CALAFIORE

CANNON

EXILES

A Nocturne's Tale
Part 1 of 2

NOCTURNE

Where was I--?
Oh, right.
Yeah, a lot changed around that time.
I mean big on the change scale--
I can tell you when it started--
--and it happened all at once.
--exactly when it started--

PART ONE

--It was *Tuesday*.

Apocalypse was at it again.

We could set our *watches* by him.

He'd demolished a couple of buildings downtown, and set up one of his big *machines*--

--he called it his *"Chronal Disrupter"*.

Something like that.

How it was going to help him take over the *world* beats me, but it was the *same-old same-old*.

Conquering the world: *him*.

Saving the world: *us*.

Fortunately, Apocalypse's son, *Armageddon*--

--yeah, well, what do you expect from a guy named *Apocalypse*?--

--had decided to switch to the *"us"* side.

And with *Phoenix* trapped in a power dampener 'Poxy had come up with, we needed some *extra muscle*.

I mean, *Shadowcat*, *Nightcrawler*, *Nocturne* and *Thunderbird*?

Not the most striking-fear-into-the-hearts-of-the-enemy kind of line-up, y'know?

TJ, no--!

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special thanks- Pete Palmotti for help with the Phoenix file's!

The telekinetics inherited from your mother are *impressive*, my son--

--but never *enough!*

BRAKK

'Scuse me, 'Poxy--

BAMFF

--pardon me, 'Poxy--

BAMFF

--comin' through, 'Poxy--

Nuisance--!

SHKOWW

HEY!

That's a *teammate* of mine!

BAMFF

Talia--

WHOUFF!

CRUNK

--Josephine *Wagner!* How many *times* must I tell you?

You cannot just *rush in* like that!

I *know,* Dad.

We're a *team.* Our efforts must be coordinated--

Okay, Dad.

--or it could cost you *your life.*

DAD--

BAMFF

It was a *pretty somersault,* though, honey.

Thanks, Aunt Kate.

My Aunt Kate Pryde *always* knew the right thing to say.

Hate to interrupt the bonding, but we got *work* to do, people.

First things first....

...everybody else keep 'Pocalypse *busy..*

...while *Kate* takes out his machine.

Don't know if I can *phase through* this field--

Hurry, Kate.

Idiots--!

--nnnghh--

I can *feel* you there, woman!

AH--

I'm through!

Good girl! Now knock out the *machine*!

Gee, ya think?

Now that I've *burned out* your toy, Apocalypse--

--it doesn't much *matter* what you feel--

Since it had returned, the *Phoenix Force* kinda did whatever it wanted.

Even if it'd had a *TK-chip* in its head to talk with the boss like the rest of us--

--that wouldn't have *stopped* it.

Kate, wait--

Oh no...

--phase-- NOW!

--does it?

What?

Oh, *right*. The Phoenix Force had set up house in the empty shell of *Colossus*.

See, Colossus had *sacrificed* himself to save his sister when her realm, Limbo...

...boy, what a *soap opera* we live in, right?

TJ--you okay?

Where's Apocalypse?

Kurt!

Kate was with 'Pocalypse's machine when it went up!

I've lost contact--!

Mein Gott!

Alles! Schnell!

SCHNELL!

I'm happy to help, but what are we looking--

--for?

--'Pocalypse is *gone* and all of his shields are down. The *cops'll* be showin' up soon.

Pick up Kate and let's get *outta here*--

Kätzchen--?

Kurt--

"--we'll have to figure this all out at *home.*"

XAVIER
1407 GRAMALKIN LANE
INSTITUTE
FOR GIFTED
CHILDREN

--outlaw mutant team known as the X-Men were involved in an incident that demolished half a city block downtown today.

Details are still sketchy, but the Mayor's office says they are coordinating a full-scale investigation.

Let's go to reporter Suzi Goldman on the scene...

NEWS

While Dad and Uncle Logan were in *strategy* mode...

That's a three-mile perimeter scan, and still *no trace.*

You want I should *expand*--?

Nah.

'Pocalypse is *gone.* Dunno where, but he's gone.

And Kate, too. *Our* Kate.

I'm assumin' when that time machine--

Chronal Disrupter.

--whatever--

--when it went up, it tossed Kate *back in time,* an' somehow swapped 'er with 'er *younger self.*

Ja, Kätzchen--

--ach, how long has it been since I called her that--?

--Kätzchen says she had just arrived at the school, *three weeks* maybe.

But if it *is* just a matter of simple time displacement, where's *our* Kate?

Why isn't she here *now,* older?

And why do we have *no memory* of her appearing twenty-five years ago and Kitty disappearing?

If she *is* alive, Kate might not be just in a different *time period,* but a different *reality* altogether...

Scent's right, but...

...best have *Moira* run a full set of tests. Let's find out if this is *our* Kitty. If not...

Ja, I know...

...I already told TJ to take her to see the **doctor.**

--in related news, the Avengers arrived home today following another successful mission, this time in South America.

4 NEWS

Seen here in file footage, the thunder god Thor and the Scarlet Witch were said to have been instrumental in repelling the alien invasion--

Go get 'em, Liebschen...

And tell TJ to put 'er over in the ***students dorm*** for the night. Maybe bein' around other kids'll help keep 'er ***calm.***

Kid's been through a ***lot.***

Ja, good idea.

--Team spokesman Iron Man said they were all just glad to be home. And now, this--

Guys--

--check it.

--just in, our exclusive 4-flash.

You are looking at amateur video shot early this morning following an FBI raid on a warehouse in Jersey City.

Details are sketchy, but you can clearly see the former X-Man known as **Cyclops** *leading a group of as yet unidentified mutants in a daring escape.*

4 FLASH

Although officials have no further comment at this time, one can't help but wonder if this signals the emergence of a **new** *Brotherhood of Evil Mutants.*

Now over to Pak Fermly and sports...

Thanks, Patsy--

The media is ***not*** being kind to Scott.

I don't ***care*** about his flamin' PR--

--it's his ***intentions*** I'd like ta know.

Hey, it's no news I never liked Cyke much, but ***he*** left.

We stayed.

Forget him.

I'm grabbin' a shower.

Meanwhile, I was giving Kitty the *grand tour*...

--so Wolverine *killed* Professor Xavier?

Yup.

And got almost *paralyzed* by it?

Yup.

But it all wasn't *Wolverine's* fault--

--'cause he was bein' mind-controlled by the *Shadow King*?

Nope.

Yup.

And he is...

Egyptian.

Fat.

Fez.

Serious old-nemesis syndrome.

An everyone forgave Wolverine 'cept *Cyclops*--

Yup.

--who left after *Jean Grey* died?

Yup.

An' now *Wolverine* runs the school.

Yup.

Mostly out of *guilt*, I think.

Uncle Logan never *forgave* himself. He's so somber now. *Grim.*

You mean as opposed to the happy-go-lucky, laugh-a-minute, champion-of-*optimism* Wolverine?

Yeah, okay, but he's different now. *Sadder.*

Hi, Miss TJ--

Hiya, Lucien.

I got a *new one*, Miss TJ. Wanna see?

Sure.

Took me all day...

Wow... that's a *beautiful* job, Lucien.

It still needs the decals...

can you help me with em?

Maybe later, Lucien TJ has to help me just now.

Hello, Talia.

Ready, Kitty?

Yes, Miss MacTaggert.

Bye, Miss TJ

Aunt Moira was a brilliant scientist, but she had tunnel vision. Super focus, but only on one thing at a time.

What are ya gonna do to me?

She hadn't been able to help Lucien for a while.

Her mind had moved on to the next problem. When that happened, the last problem got kinda forgotten.

Oh, nothing too serious, just run some tests.

I guarantee you that my last few patients have survived with only minor injuries.

But--

Poor Lucien.

- Miss MacTaggert--

--can you send me home?

Aunt Moira said all the right things to Kitty. Kept her hope up.

Promised we'd get her back to her time somehow.

Too bad, really. She didn't know how empty her promises were.

Kitty didn't go home--

--and I never saw Aunt Kate again.

At least not before I left.

I don't know *how long* Armageddon stood there in the middle of the room--

but Dad said that's how he *found* him.

Dad said he wished he'd thought more about Geddy's *temporary quarters.*

I would've thought more about the *bed.* Compared to Armageddon, it was *tiny.* No way he could *lie down* on it.

If he was feeling out of place *before*..

...symbo ism with a sledgehammer, or *what?*

Settling in, Armageddon?

How are you doing?

How am I doing .

...how am I doing .

. I'm not sure, Nightcrawler

It's *Kurt.*

Kurt...

. .how *should* I be doing? Let's review--

--I *betrayed* my father and helped h s *mortal enemies* to--

What? *Kill* him? *Can* Apoca ypse die?

I doubt it.

You did the *right thing.*

I understand that, believe me I made my choice, but it doesn't *change* where I am now--

--which feels very much like *nowhere.*

But you *are* somewhere...you're *here.* And considering from where you came, that's no sma accomplishment.

And we're offering you a *place* here. It s not a free ride, you have to earn it, but you *can* belong.

Consider it.

You know, I don't th nk any of us who ever came here *didn't* feel lost at some t me

That s always been an *important part* of the Professor's dream--

--g ving us a *home* and a *family.*

Gute nacht.

...I never saw anything like *Lucien.*

He used to be a *normal kid.* Then he--well, I guess he *saved* us all

Used to take away people's pain, their injuries, diseases, defects, and *absorb* it into himself. Then he could, like, *purge* it from his system.

So using Cerebro and a bunch of telepaths, he absorbed the *Legacy Virus* from the whole world. Only he couldn't get *rid* of it--

--and now he looks like *that.* It's driving him crazy, and his *room* isn't helping.

Oh, wow..

oh!

Evening, ladies. Didn't mean to *scare* ya.

My shower's out. Figured I'd use the dorm locker room.

How ya doin', Kitty? Adjusting?

James.

We weren't dating then, but I just had the *biggest* crush.

He was *scary,* too. He could get so *angry,* so quickly. Lots of *rage.* But maybe that was one of the attractions, the *danger.*

Had *nothing* to do with the deep brown eyes and the washboard abs

Boy, I acted like such a *girl* around him then.

I'm fine. TJ's been showing me around.

My choice for a guide.

Well, have fun, lad es.

Wow. Is he *cute!*

Kitty.

And look at his butt...

Kitty!

Oh, like *you* haven't looked at his butt?

No.

Never?

No.

No?

No.

C'mon...

...sounds like the kids are still up.

Qualitatively, this is not productive--

Gooh!

--do you agree, Talia Josephine Wagner?

You bet, Warlock.

But shouldn't some of you guys be in *bed*?

Just ten more minutes, Miss Wagner?

Okay, Kiko, just don't singe the furniture too much.

Kay Miss Wagner

Guys, I'd like you to meet

I am *SO* not a part of this

Gek!!

Yaah!

That's good, Truddy Listen, I want you all to--

Aaah--

Quit it!

you'll meet them in the morning, Kitty.

There weren't any kids but *me* when I joined the X-Men

Really? There've been young students here as long as I can *remember*. A couple of them are almost ready to join the *field unit*.

OW!

Hey!

Well, here's your room. Homey, yet ugly.

If I were an adult, I'd say you need to get your rest..

. so I ll see you in the morning?

Promise?

MUTANT HIGH XX RECREATION

I promise

TJ ?

I want to go home

Get Out.

Odd. It is the only *void* I have, no longer sharing a conscious human host...

...these *dreams* you all experience... such *emotions*. Stronger sometimes than the *waking hours*.

And yours are so *very* strong. I am *drawn* to it.

Get out.

Hmm.

You know that I can *repair* you, make you physically *whole* again. I can see the knowledge in your mind.

And yet, you *refuse* to ask it of me. Why?

When does your *penance* end?

GET OUT

We didn't see the Phoenix for a *while* after that night--

--but when we *did* see her aga n--

--*whew!* That s a whole nother story

Anyway, the next morn ng, Dad had me runn ng a *Danger Room* routine--

--and I was having *fun.*

Too much fun

PROGRAM RUNNING

CHAK

CHAK

SPLT

End program!

Talia Josephine--

And here it came again...

Why can I ***not*** get you to understand the ***seriousness*** of this? This is ***deadly*** serious! Even here.

This is for ***your good!***

Why can you ***not*** listen to me? Why can you ***not*** follow my instructions?

Why can you ***not*** even--

Because I'm ***not you!***

I'll never be you, so stop trying to ***make*** me you!

And you're not going to ***change*** me by constantly yelling, and lecturing, and reprimanding! It just ***hurts!***

When do I get to be ***me?!***

TJ--?

TJ, where ya goin'?

Out.

Can I--can I come?

...sure.

...then she left.

I've never *seen* her like that. She was so *angry*, Logan.

I don't know... perhaps she's *right*, *mein Freund*.

I've only been trying to *prepare* her.

To teach her the necessary skills to *survive* in our world, but...

...have I been too *demanding* of her? Too *harsh*?

Yup.

She's *yer* kid, Elf. Ya raise 'er as ya see fit. But if yer gonna ask me, I ain't gonna *lie* to ya.

Ya been pushin' 'er too hard, without noticin' she's only been tryin' to please *you*.

I mean, c'mon, she's even wearin' yer *old costume*.

Looks a lot *better* on her, too.

Ja, but--

SMASH!

I'm home...

NEXT: THINGS GET WORSE